



National Commission on the Future of the Army

2530 Crystal Drive, Zachary Taylor Building, Suite 5000
Arlington, VA 22202

SUBJECT: National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA) Joint Forces Training Base Los Alamitos Site Visit Minutes

Dates: 25 Aug 2015

Locations: Army Reserve Center, Joint Forces Training Base (JFTB) Los Alamitos

Format: Briefing

NCFA Attendees:

HON Robert Hale – Commissioner
LTG (Ret) Jack Stultz – Commissioner
SMA (Ret) Raymond Chandler – Commissioner
Mr. Donald Tison – Designated Federal Officer (DFO)
MAJ Cory Simpson – Legal Advisor to DFO
Ms. Deborah S. Gantt – Alternate Designated Federal Officer (ADFO)
COL Rich Miller – NCFA Staff
COL Kristen Dixon – NCFA Staff
LTC Greg Hartvigsen – NCFA Staff
LTC Steve Pierce – NCFA Staff
LTC Brian D. Stevenson – NCFA Staff
Ms. Cherie S. Emerson – NCFA Staff

Documents Submitted to Commission:

- 79th Sustainment Support Command brief
- U.S. Army Garrison Fort Hunter Liggett Total Force Support Capabilities brief

NCFA personnel afternoon activities involved briefings from 79th Sustainment Support Command (SSC), Ft Hunter-Liggett Garrisons and 91st Training Division, California Army National Guard (CAARNG) 40th Infantry Division (ID) personnel.

79th Sustainment Support Command attendees

MG Megan Tatu, Commanding General
CSM Ted Copeland, Command Sergeant Major
CW5 Michael Hanten, Command Chief Warrant Officer
COL Anthony Francia, G-3

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COL Arthur Turnier, Comptroller

LTC David Sonnek, Inspector General

LTC Mercedes Murillo, G-3

MAJ Henry Empeno, Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) Commander

1SG Shamika Copenhagen, HHC 1SG

MSG Joshua Troche, G-1

SGT Jesus Lopez, HHC

Mr. Jimmy Crisp, Security Specialist

Ms. Maurnike Stevenson, SHARP Program Manager

MAJ Joycelyn Magday, Scribe

Start time: 1205hrs

End time: 1300hrs

Summary: Commissioner Hale opened the meeting by explaining the authorities establishing the Commission and shared information about recent Commission activities. The DFO explained the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) requirements to the group.

The 79th SSC Commander explained the 79th SSC's mission as Command and Control for assigned Army Reserve units (mainly logistic units located west of the Mississippi River). The 79th SSC currently organizes under a Tables of Distribution and Allowance (TDA), but will convert to a Modified Tables of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) unit in September 2017. The biggest issues faced by the 79th SSC are reduced training budget, levels of Full Time Manning (FTS), and civilian employee concern over additional government shutdowns.

The general consensus on FTS was the authorized FTS numbers are too low. Many noted it is difficult to link FTS to unit readiness, when asked how the Army could link FTS to readiness. All agreed simply increasing FTS would not necessarily increase readiness, but decreasing FTS from current levels definitely would adversely impact readiness. One Soldier noted tying FTS to individual readiness was easier to categorize (e.g. personnel records, etc.) and overall unit readiness is really a leadership issue.

Many Soldiers agreed the expected reduction in resources will significantly impact the type and number of training events units can conduct during the year. For example, reductions cut funds available for Soldiers to attend a school and also attend their units' annual training. Often Soldiers are left choosing to attend one or the other.

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Funding issues also impact the relationship between Soldiers and their civilian employers. One major issue the Army Reserve faces is the inability to produce orders for Soldiers attending individual training. These orders are used to officially notify their civilian employers of upcoming training in a timely manner. Many of these problems are caused by Continuing Resolutions at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Several Soldiers mentioned the amount of “mandated training” requirements limit the amount of time for military training and these requirements are generally not critical to their military job. Additionally, several of the “mandated training requirements” are similar to, or even the same in some cases, as compulsory requirements in their civilian jobs. Soldiers feel further guidance from Army senior leaders would help to indicate areas of acceptable risk and prioritize mandatory training requirements.

Several senior NCOs noted a large portion of the professional military education for Reserve Component (RC) Soldiers is conducted online and only accessible by their Common Access Card (CAC). Two issues discussed were the lack of CAC enabled computers for Soldiers (either personal or provided by the Army), and the decreasing number of Soldiers who use devices with CAC enabled ports (either in the machine itself or through a USB device). Many Soldiers depend on their smart phone or iPad type tablets, which for the most part are not CAC enabled.

The Commissioners asked, what is the right level of Operational Tempo (OPTEMPO) for the RC? The majority agreed that 1:4 to 1:5 is about right. Many Soldiers indicated the “dwell time” doesn’t significantly reduce the training tempo, especially in the year proceeding the “ready” year. Many employers commented the 1:5 ratio is actually more like 1.5 : 5 because of the increased training requirements to train a unit to “ready” standards.

When asked about the force going back to a “strategic reserve,”ⁱ all Soldiers agreed this would cause Soldiers to depart the service. The majority of Soldiers who enlisted in RC prior to 2001, primarily for college benefits, have now left the Army. While Soldiers still enlist for the benefits, they also want to deploy.

Commissioners asked about how well the AC/RC transition process worked and the group agreed the program worked well. However, several suggested the transition process might be better if an AC Soldier was linked-up earlier in the transition process with the potential RC unit.

The 79th SSC discussion ended at 1300hrs and briefers changed to the team from Ft Hunter-Liggett and 91st Training Division.

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Ft Hunter-Ligget and 91st Training Division attendees

COL Jan C. Norris, Garrison Commander

CSM Tracy E. Barlogio, Garrison Command Sergeant Major

LTC David L. Phillips, Deputy Director, Plans, Training, Mobilization, and Security

COL Bradley Upton, Deputy Commander, 91st Training Division

Start time: 1309hrs

End time: 1345hrs

Summary: Commissioner Hale opened the meeting by explaining the authorities establishing the Commission and shared information about recent Commission activities. The DFO explained the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) requirements to the group.

COL Norris started the briefing by orienting the group to the location of Fort Hunter-Ligget (FHL), roughly in the middle coastal region of California. He explained the post is a federally owned property administered by the U.S. Army Installation Management Command (IMCOM) with the Army Reserve providing the funding and manning of the garrison. The remote location of FHL provides 160,000 acres of training area with a variety of terrain, including a 5-mile convoy live-fire range. The post is mainly used by Army Reserve and National Guard units for training, however over the past three years, units from all Services, multinational partners, local and federal agencies have significantly increased use. One reason offered for the increase is that FHL does not charge for usage of its training areas. The Commissioners asked if the post could continue to support the increased usage without charging, and COL Norris stated at the current level they could, but post support is at its maximum capacity.

The Commissioners asked about the mission of the 91st Training Division and COL Upton explained the 91st conducts Combat Support Training Exercises (CSTXs) to train and assess unit readiness of RC units. The 91st Division normally conducts two large scale CSTXs at FHL every year.

The briefing ended at 1345hrs and NCFA personnel moved to the 40th ID Headquarters building.

CAARNG, 40th ID, and UTARNG attending

MG David Baldwin, TAG California

MG Jefferson Burton, TAG Utah

MG Lawrence Haskins, Commander 40th Infantry Division

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BG John Lathrop, Assistant Commander 40th Infantry Division
CSM William Clark Jr, State Command Sergeant Major California
COL Laura Yeager, Joint Chief of Staff, CAARNG
COL Jeffrey Smiley, J3, CAARNG
COL Michael Leeney, Chief of Staff, 40th Infantry Division, CAARNG
MAJ Adam Rix 40th DIV Operations Officer, CAARNG
CW5 Kenneth Jones, Instructor Pilot, 1-211th ARB UTARNG
CW5 Chris Good, Instructor Pilot, 40th CAB CAARNG
CW4 Stephen Rugg, Instructor Pilot, 1-211th ARB UTARNG
CW4 Ryan Eyre, Instructor Pilot, 1-211th ARB UTARNG
CW4 Robert Williams, Instructor Pilot, 1-211th ARB UTARNG
LTC Richard Mifsud, Commander, 1-160th IN BN CAARNG
CSM Sergio Porras, CSM, 1-160th IN BN CAARNG
LTC Jilian Bond, Commander, 224th SB CAARNG
SGM Gregory Silva, CSM, 746th CSSB CAARNG
COL Peter Cross, Commander, 49th MP CAARNG
SGM Cari Beetham, Operations SGM – 49th MP CAARNG
CSM Rodney Plamondon, CSM 1-184th IN BN CAARNG
CPT Manuel Arino, Unit Member 40th IDCAARNG
2LT Jawana McFadden, Unit Member 40th CAARNG
SFC Ben Nievera, Unit Member 40th CAARNG
SFC Jose Garcia, Unit Member 40th CAARNG
MSG Emily Toomey, Unit Member 40th CAARNG
SSG Jeffrey Nelan, Unit Member 40th CAARNG
SSG Ian Tashima, Unit Member 40th CAARNG

Start time: 1355hrs

End time: 1715hrs

Documents Submitted to Commission:

1. 40th Division brief
2. Apache Maintenance and Contract Maintenance info sheet
3. 1-130th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion North Carolina National Guard
4. Aviation Restructuring Initiative California National Guard Input for the GAO Report
5. Aviation Restructuring Initiative GAO Submittal
6. Executive Summary on the Input for GAO Report on Aviation Restructuring Initiative Stemming from the NDAA
7. Slides: Aviation Restructuring Initiative is a Bad Idea
8. Slides: Road to Aviation Restructuring Initiative
9. Texas Aviation Restructuring Initiative Talking Points

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10. 1-104 Attack Reconnaissance Battalion of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard Unit Resume
11. 1-130 ACS Tennessee Army National Guard Afghanistan Article
12. 1-130th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion North Carolina Army National Guard
13. 1-135th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion Missouri Army National Guard
14. 1-149th ARNG AH-64D Missouri National Guard Assessment
15. 1-149th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion Texas Army National Guard Overview
16. 1-149th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion Mississippi Scout Attack Unit History Executive Summary
17. 1-151st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion South Carolina Army National Guard History
18. 1-151st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion South Carolina Army National Guard Overview
19. 1-183rd Attack Reconnaissance Battalion Idaho Army National Guard Resume
20. 1-183rd Attack Reconnaissance Battalion Idaho Army National Guard Resume Brief
21. 1-185th Armor Brigade Combat Team Arizona Army National Guard Storyboard
22. 1-211st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion Utah Army National Guard Overview
23. 1-211st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion Utah Army National Guard Resume
24. 1-211th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion Utah Army National Guard Resume/Executive Summary
25. 1-230th Cavalry Regiment Tennessee Army National Guard Unit History
26. 1-285th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion Arizona Army National Guard Unit History
27. Battle of Donkey Island by the 1-135th ARBG Missouri Army National Guard
28. Historical Narrative of the 1-135th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion Missouri Army National Guard
29. History of the 1-149th Aviation Regiment Texas Army National Guard

MAJ Rix, 40th Infantry Division Operations Officer, presented a Battle Update Brief, which detailed CAARNG efforts in fighting the 12 large fires in CA along with other activities. CAARNG is getting the necessary volunteers for these missions; and most Soldiers are able to respond to Domestic Operations (DOM-OPS) within six hours. CAARNG has 8 to 10 State Partnership for Peace (SPP) engagements a year. Part of the SPP engagements includes sending 85 Soldiers to Ukraine for a 6-8 month deployment funded under 10 U.S.C. § 12304b provisions.

The 40th Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) and its 1-211th Attack/Recon Battalion (ARB) from Utah presented information regarding Apache aviator training, experience, unit and deployment history. Commissioners asked questions regarding air to ground integration, specifically with Army ground maneuver units. CW5 Jones indicated most National Guard ARBs work with other organic units to the State, other components and Services rather than BCTs assigned to 40th ID, unless the units are co-located in the

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State. For example, during previous two years following 1-211th ARB's last deployment, the unit trained with 40th CAB and 40th ID BCTs.

Following the 40th ID briefings, brigade and battalion senior leaders held a round table discussion with Commissioners. They discussed how ARNG end-strength reductions, fewer deployments, shrinking budgets, and lower full time manning levels would affect their units. The senior leaders indicated they have planned to reduce the force, but that will cause unease and uncertainty with the Soldiers. Soldiers want to deploy and the CAARNG can use major training exercises, as well as overseas training opportunities to challenge and keep Soldiers motivated. Reduced funding and full-time manning levels always cause difficulties, but the senior leaders make adjustments to maintain training levels. Training and unit participation is significantly more than the minimum 39 days per year for unit leadership. Leaders spend as many as 93 days with inspections, training meetings, leader meetings and working with Soldiers between drill periods. All senior brigade and battalion leaders agreed mandatory training requirements are too time consuming and voluminous to complete.

Company grade leaders mentioned they are not getting paid for the extra training and leader time spent preparing for drill and training assemblies. More funding is needed to properly compensate leaders for their time. Despite the budget shortfalls, they are committed to making the mission happen. The senior NCOs indicated the need for more resident schooling.

The Adjutant Generals (TAGs) indicated the mobilization to dwell (MOB-Dwell) ratio for aviation units could be 1:2 or 1:3, while other units 1:4 would be more appropriate. MG Burton indicated Soldier maintenance vs contract maintenance could be a significant cost savings, particularly in aviation maintenance. MG Baldwin stated there are not enough AH-64 aircraft in the Army to conduct all the required and anticipated needs worldwide.

TAGs indicated that Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) ⁱⁱ have positive effects on training and relevancy. Compared to the former Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) readiness model, the Strategic Readiness Model (SRM) is preferred as this allows a unit not deployed during its available year to remain at higher levels of readiness. Contrary to what many believe, RC units are training on brigade and battalion level critical tasks, not just platoon tasks. Commanders and brigade/battalion staffs are training during Command Post Exercises (CPXs) and Warfighter Exercises (WFs). MG Baldwin suggested the Army look back at the "band of excellence" training paradigm. Augmenting the training requirements in the RC requires more FTS manning. TAGs tried to dispel some confusion over the definition of Attrition Rate and Retention rates. CA and UT Military Occupation Skill Qualification (MOSQ) is around 95% and attrition rates are between 11-15%.

MG Baldwin explained RC accessibility by tying access to funding (i.e. access is not driven by training or desire of RC to deploy). He recommended the Army look at GEN Walsh's playbook (Air Force) on how to integrate and use the RC. He also

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recommended ARNG BCTs be employed during their available years for 4, 6, and 12-month deployments. The RC could deploy about 5-7 BCTs a year in this model which would take stress off the AC's deployments. Commissioners and the TAGs discussed Round-Out units¹ and blended formations both in the AC and RC. MG Baldwin would like to see AC and RC leaders assigned in various organization in various Army components as well as making a requirement for an AC officer to serve in the RC in order to promote to the General Officer level.

The group discussion ended at 1715 hrs.

ⁱ DoD policy (DoD Directive 1200.17, Managing the RC as an Operational Force, October 2008) directed that the Armed Services manage their RCs as an operational force including integrating all components as a total force. The RC plays both an operational and strategic role, e.g., "the RCs provide operational capabilities and strategic depth to meet U.S. defense strategy requirements across the full spectrum of conflict." This directive does not use or define the terms operational reserve and strategic reserve.

ⁱⁱ Regional alignment is an organizing policy that improves the Army's ability to provide responsive, specifically trained, and culturally attuned forces to support Combatant Command requirements. Regionally Aligned Forces come from across the Total Army and all force categories.

¹ From 1973 to 1996, the US Army employed various forms of "round out" and "round up" units to use separate Reserve Component brigades to round out Regular Army Divisions manned at two thirds strength.